City of Greenwood Comprehensive Plan

2007 - 2027

INDIANA

SECTION EIGHT

Urban Design

HNTB





Introduction

Cities such as Greenwood implement urban design guidelines and regulations to better define a sense of place and enhance the quality of the community's built environment through the creation of a community-wide, or district

character. Typically, zoning ordinances define development standards such as setbacks, massing, sign limitations, etc. Urban design guidelines typically address level of treatment for elements such as: site layout and design, building layout and design, landscaping, signage design, traffic circulation, lighting, etc.

The city's use of relatively higher design standards in certain areas resulted in developments that reflect the character and value of the Greenwood Community; a trend that has the potential to set Greenwood apart from the other suburban communities near Indianapolis.

This section is intended to assist property owners, tenants, designers, and contractors in establishing a distinct character for the City of Greenwood through the use of elements of design and aesthetic quality, which are independent of development standards. Often confused with development standards and regulations, development guidelines allow for greater flexibility in design and construction, and can result in a better design aesthetic.

Creating and implementing design standards for private developments in newer parts of Greenwood has resulted in more aesthetically pleasing development. The city has the ability to set an example for all development within the application of urban design elements to better define community and/or district characteristics.

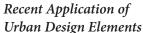
The following subsections identify the areas of the community where urban design elements should be applied as well as to describe the various levels of treatment for each urban design element.

Treatment Areas

Through this comprehensive plan planning process the City of Greenwood has determined that the following areas are appropriate for the application urban design elements. These areas include: gateways, corridors, redevelopment areas, and community focal points.

<u>Gateways</u>

A gateway is a landmark, streetscape or other area that a visitor or resident first sees when entering a community. The purpose of a gateway is to create a ceremonial entryway into the community. The motorist, bicyclist or pedestrian achieves a sense of arrival. Gateways also contribute to a strong sense of









Source: Community Based Projects, Ball State University

community identity, and provide a unique visual experience for motorized and non-motorized travelers.

Gateways take on a variety of forms. Historically they take the form of signs, sculptures, passageways or architectural embellishments. Destinations such as commercial corridors and even interstate highway interchanges can be built to create unique celebratory entry points. Some of the most common gateway applications include: pedestrian and vehicular bridges, corridors, and

Goal #1: Establish multiple focal points throughout the city that convey a sense of place and cohesiveness. Ensure that these focal points are conveniently accessible and are surrounded by publicly accessible gathering areas

Goal #2: Create publicly accessible and inviting greenspaces throughout the city and connect these spaces through and east/west network of pedestrian-friendly transportation infrastructure

Goal #3: Establish a theme that is identifiably Greenwood yet flexible enough to be incorporated into the fabric of the diverse areas of the city and still provide for the retention of a unique character

Goal #4: Establish this theme city-wide, but require that this theme be expressed in innovative ways in order to encourage diversity in the built environment

downtown gateways. Gateways can be elaborate or understated depending on the identity and the context.

The City of Greenwood does not currently have a well established network of gateways that go beyond a sign identifying a particular segment of the city. This is true for the Old Town area and the overall community. By identifying strategic locations and visually attractive design elements, the City of Greenwood can distinguish itself as unique place with strong civic pride.

Potential gateway locations have been identified in recent amendments to the Greenwood Thoroughfare Plan. Community gateways have been proposed at the following locations. Refer to the Future Transportation Map in Section 6, Transportation.

Major Gateways

- County Line Rd. and I-65
- Main St. and I-65
- Worthsville Rd. Interchange (proposed)

Prominent Entry Points

- SR 135 and County Line Rd.
- US 31 and County Line Rd.
- Madison Ave. and County Line Rd.
- Emerson Ave. and County Line Rd.
- Main St. (west of SR 135)
- Graham Rd. and County Line Rd.
- SR 135 and Stones Crossing (proposed)

Old Town

- US 31 and Main St.
- Madison north of Noble St.

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- Madison south of Home Ave.
- Main St. and Middle St.

The next steps will be to design or identify the type or form to be used to identify these gateways.

Corridors

In addition to cleaning up the visual clutter that typically aligns the major thoroughfares of suburban communities, corridor improvements are instrumental in creating efficiency in road function through the use of access management treatments setting the tone for development and redevelopment of the adjacent properties.

Access management is a set of techniques that state and local governments can use to plan for and control access to highways, major arterials, and other roadways. Access management includes several techniques that are designed to increase the capacity of these roads, manage congestion, and reduce crashes. From increasing spacing between signals and interchanges to the use of frontage roads, access management maintains the appropriate spacing of access points and the total number of access points along a primary thoroughfare. There are many benefits of access management, including:

- Reducing the potential for traffic accidents;
- Improving traffic flow;
- Improving pedestrian safety;
- Protecting the function of state highways;
- · Preserving safety, capacity and efficiency; and
- Promoting orderly development of adjacent properties.

Like a gateway, a well planned corridor can achieve a sense of arrival, contribute to a strong sense of community identity, and provide a unique visual experience. The aesthetic treatment of corridors is typically accomplished by the use of Overlay Districts, similar to the city's existing I-65 Corridor Overlay District.

The City of Greenwood's transportation system includes numerous thoroughfare corridors. The use of these roadways goes beyond traffic counts and travel lanes. When transit corridors are combined with the adjacent land uses, some of these thoroughfare corridors also become commercial corridors or transitional corridors (Refer to Sections 5 & 6 of this plan). State Road 135, US 31, and to a somewhat lesser degree Madison Ave and I-65, are commercial corridors. Transitional corridors exist along SR 431, US 31 and County Line Rd. These corridors are critical to providing efficient transit; however, they can also be used to support and encourage desired development practices.

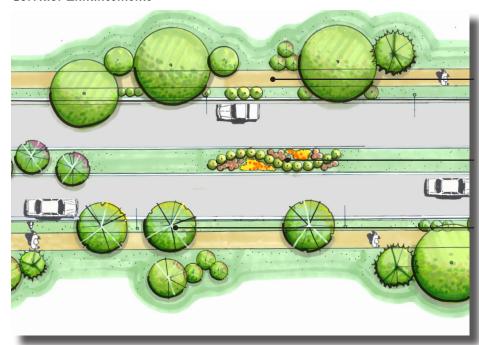
By establishing a set of guidelines for these commercial and transitional corridors, planners, agencies, engineers, and elected officials are better able to describe how to best use the space within the right-of-way to enhance the appearance and function of Greenwood's corridors. For example, there are a number of aesthetic treatments which can be used to improve and define the street edge and access points. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Raised medians.
- Landscape treatments,
- Pedestrian treatments,
- Ornamental lighting,
- Intersection treatments,
- A gateway system,
- · Wayfinding signage, and

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Trail crossing segments

Corridor Enhancements

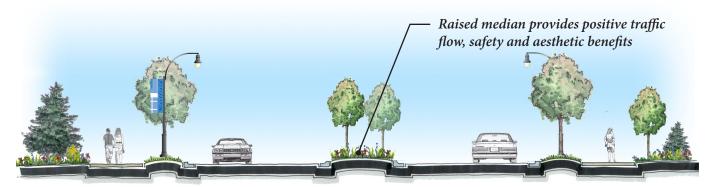


Multi-use corridor trail separated from roadway with 8' planted utility strip

Planted median creates continuity throughout corridor

Enhancements including street trees and decorative street lights tie the corridor together

Raised Median



Redevelopment Areas

Redevelopment areas, such U.S. 31 and SR 135 corridors, present an opportunity to incorporate urban design elements which are desirable to the Greenwood community. There is typically an attempt to retrofit what was more than likely a single large use through the creation of a mixed use, transit-oriented development that will result in a more compact urban form in a strategically located area of the community. This is in response to the trend towards Lifestyle Centers. Refer to Section 2, Trends for additional information on Lifestyle Centers and mixed-use developments.

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Community Focal Points

In general, community focal points consist of outdoor "rooms" or distinctive "places" accessible to the public which further enhance the quality and enjoyment of the pedestrian environment.

To lead by example, the City of Greenwood should employ the use of the following urban design elements by incorporating them into the design of any and all public gathering spaces, or other community focal points.

Level of Treatment

Preference for a particular level of treatment will vary from project to project, area to area. Each development or redevelopment proposal should include thoughtful consideration with respect to the desired level of treatment for the following design elements.

Site Design & Layout

In addition to traffic circulation and access, site design and layout has historically included the identification of lot size, setbacks, and the physical placement of the building on the site in relationship to the street and parking. Parking, which is typically located in front of the building, can be moved to the side or the rear to better connect the structure, pedestrian, and street.

Traffic circulation typically depends on traffic counts and the number of travel lanes. Conversely, access management involves the implementation and control of roadway design elements in order to allow for safe and efficient access to property while preserving the traffic movement function of the city's transportation system.

Proper access management can preserve the efficiency of a corridor, reduce congestion, minimize traffic accidents, while providing for an aesthetic appeal that measures taken to provide for adequate traffic circulation cannot. Access management involves the physical layout, operations and institutional control of a roadway. Access management design elements typically include:

- Raised medians,
- Continuous two-way left turn lanes,
- Traffic signal spacing,
- Unsignalized access spacing,
- Roundabout intersections,
- · Auxiliary lanes, and
- Driveway design, including shared driveways

Lighting

Lighting features are a necessary component of any outdoor space. A single design concept can help achieve a cohesive character.

In order to create a theme along the city's corridors, lighting poles and fixtures need to take on a consistent style. Special attention should be given to the type of fixture used in order to prevent light from spilling onto adjacent properties, and creating light pollution.

<u>Signage</u>

Signage design guidelines have historically related to the type, size, and location of all proposed signs. One example of a type of sign is wayfinding signage. Wayfinding signage typically includes a system of freestanding vehicular and pedestrian scaled wayfinding signs and pole mounted ornamental street signs that enhance the image of the city in addition to conveying important information to the reader. Individual destinations are

typically publicly owned and located within the community's jurisdiction.

Landscaping

Well designed and maintained landscaping often provides the biggest impact with the least amount of cost. Coupled with signage and lighting, landscaping can create a unified theme for a corridor, a system of gateways, a redevelopment area, or a public gathering space. The restoration or preservation of existing native vegetation, including large specimen trees and shrubs will give the landscaping a more natural, moderate level of treatment. Ornamental trees and shrubs in combination with flowering perennials in areas of special interest can create an

impact that may be interpreted as moderate or aggressive. Landscaping standards typically cover greenway landscaping, street landscaping, building perimeter landscaping, parking lot landscaping (interior and perimeter), building perimeter landscaping,

Building Design & Layout

Building design guidelines have historically focused on the buffering of such things as loading/unloading areas, refuse areas, and HVAC equipment.

Building layout guidelines have historically focused on the structures relationship to other buildings and the orientation of the structure to support the street. Without Architectural Design Standards



With Architectural Design Standards



<u>Pedestrian Facilities & Amenities</u>

Pedestrian facilities are likely to include multi-use paths and pedestrian crossings. Multi-use paths create safer alternatives for bicyclists, while allowing room for pedestrians. Multi-use paths can be exist on their own, or in conjunction with a roadway. Off-street, multi-use paths are often referred to as greenways.

In areas with such large volumes of traffic, pedestrian crossing should be wider and constructed out of a different material than the roadway. The effect of this type of treatment is two-fold. First, motorists tend to slow down when the surface they are traveling on is interrupted. Second, it raises the level of importance of the pedestrian in the area where the treatment is applied. Under the most ideal of circumstances, bike and pedestrian facilities should be separated from the roadway by a grass buffer strip. This treatment provides the pedestrian with a greater sense of security, further increasing the feasibility and desirability for non-motorized travel.

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Pedestrian amenities typically include benches, trash receptacles, drinking fountains, and bike racks. While they are often not considered as standard enhancements, such as access management, landscaping, signage and lighting) every attempt should be made to incorporate pedestrian amenities that compliment the other urban design elements of an area. This is typically where the construction and planting materials palette play the largest role.

Construction & Planting Materials Palette

A simple and complimentary palette can make a statement through the use of colors and textures. A change in pavement material can have the

effect of heightening motorists awareness of the presence of pedestrians providing for a much safer environment for non-motorized transportation.



Pedestrian-friendly Pavement



The following pages contain images illustrating sample treatments, ranging from minimal to aggressive, for a number of urban design elements discussed above.

Minimal to moderate



Moderate



Moderate to aggressive



Minimal



Moderate



Aggressive



Minimal



Moderate



Aggressive



Greenway Treatment

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Minimal



Moderate



Aggressive



Minimal



Moderate



Aggressive



Minimal



Moderate



Aggressive



Building Perimeter Treatment

Minimal



Moderate



Aggressive



Minimal to moderate



Minimal to moderate



Aggressive



Parking Lot Landscaping Treatment

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